

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-16 and 18-30 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 have been amended, claims 6 and 17 have been cancelled and claims 23-30 have been added.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary.

Although Applicant added new claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims, Applicant asserts that no new issues are being raised because the independent claims now recite allowable features as indicated by the Office Action and the claims added were previously presented. In particular, claims 6, 7, 17 and 18 were indicated as allowable. Applicant thus amends claims 1 and 12 to incorporate the allowable features of claims 6 and 17, respectively, and claims 7 and 18 have been amended into independent form. Furthermore, Applicant adds claims 23-26 to correspond to original claims 2-5 but to depend directly or indirectly from allowable claim 7. Claims 27-30 have been added to correspond to original claims 13-16 but to depend directly or indirectly from allowable claim 18. Accordingly, although Applicant adds new claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims, no new issues are being raised because the independent claims are allowable and the new claims have been previously examined. It is thus respectfully requested that the Amendment be entered.

An Election of Species was required in this application. Accordingly, Applicant elected Figures 1-9. Applicant asserts that claims 1-3, 7-14, 18-24, 27 and 28 read on and are supported by elected Figures 1-9. Applicant also requests rejoinder of claims 4, 5, 15, 16, 25, 26, 29 and 30 because claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 remain generic to claims 4, 5, 15, 16, 25, 26, 29

and 30 and would thus be allowable for the same reasons that claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 would be allowable.

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowability for claims 6-11 and 17-22. As discussed, Applicant incorporates the features of claims 6 and 17 into claims 1 and 12, respectively, and amends claims 7 and 18 into independent form.

The rejection of claims 1-3 and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Yoshida, U. S. Patent No. 6,024,410 has been rendered moot by the incorporation of claims 6 and 17 into claims 1 and 12, respectively. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-5, 7-16 and 18-30 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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